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FOR FIFTEEN YEARS, THE LESBIAN AND GAY WEEKLY

Judge orders tests for Kowalski

First legal breakthrough comes as activists meet to organize nationwide action

By Caroline Foty

DULUTH, MN — A judge has ordered that Sharon Kowalski, a lesbian severely limited in an accident in 1983, be formally tested for competency. Judge Robert Campbell ruled Feb. 5 that Kowalski's new court-appointed attorney, Gary Pagliacetti, should consult with Duluth-area physicians to select a site for the testing. The ruling means that Kowalski will be tested for the first time since the court order 3 years ago appointing her father as guardian — an order that required him to have her tested at least annually.

Campbell also supported the request that no attorneys except Pagliacetti be allowed to contact Kowalski's evaluators until their report is issued. The request had been made by attorneys for Karen Thompson, Kowalski's lover, who has been fighting Kowalski's parents for the right to see and care for Kowalski since the accident. Campbell asked that attorneys for Thompson, Kowalski and the parents submit their suggestions for testing parameters. When Campbell has received these and the test site has been selected, he will write his formal order.

Pagliacetti was appointed by Campbell in November when the motion to enforce the original ruling to test Kowalski came before the court. Campbell selected Pagliacetti in part because he has a handicapped daughter living with him at home. Pagliacetti told the court that he had visited Kowalski four times for between a half hour and hour each time. He said he believes she understands what others say to her, and can communicate effectively when she desires. He added that people much more severely injured than Kowalski can communicate with the use of a computer and move around in an electric wheelchair. He said Kowalski has much more potential than she is being allowed to use or explore. According to observers in the courtroom, Campbell asked Kowalski's parents and their attorney, Jack Fena, whether they intended to get their daughter a computer, and they responded they were looking into it.

When the testing is complete, all parties involved in the legal battle will receive a copy of the report, and a hearing will be held to formally define Kowalski's competence.

The judge also requested that both the Kowalskis and Thompson provide him with statements detailing how their attorney's fees are being paid. Thompson's attorneys said they believe Campbell is concerned about the state of Kowalski's personal assets and wants to ensure that they are not being consumed by the litigation over her guardianship.

Thompson and her attorney said they are pleased to have a new judge, Campbell, who seems to be taking a strong interest in Kowalski's situation. Toni Pomerene, Thompson's attorney, told national activists supporting Thompson that she believes Campbell intends to proceed with great care and deliberation, so that his rulings in the case will be credible and durable. Campbell's rulings will be watched by gay

and lesbian legal advocates across the country since they may have implications for other lesbians or gay men whose partners are disabled.

Pomerene said that while organizers focus on the need for legal recognition of Thompson's relationship with Kowalski, neither Pagliacetti nor Campbell are prioritizing that at this time. She said they are instead concentrating on Kowalski's health, competence and medical care. Thompson said she is relieved that someone is finally concerned for Kowalski's recovery. However, she said she fears the judge and attorney are "making the heterosexual assumption" and devaluing her relationship with Kowalski because they are not a heterosexual couple. Both Thompson and Pomerene said they want to work within the structures set up by Campbell, who they say seems concerned about how Kowalski's interests can best be served.

While Campbell's ruling is a heartening reversal of a string of legal setbacks, Thompson said she was saddened by the length of time it has taken to reach this point. "He [Pagliacetti] is saying all the things I've been saying for years," she said, "and no one listened to me. Now they appoint this man to be Sharon's attorney, and suddenly people are listening. Meanwhile, look how much time has been lost for Sharon."

Campbell's ruling came three weeks before 30 activists from all over the country met in Minneapolis to plan national organizing priorities. The Feb. 27 meeting included attendees from California, Colorado, New York, Boston, Minneapolis, Maine, New Jersey, and Washington, D.C. Whereas their first meeting, last October, was dedicated to brainstorming, creating solidarity, and defining general goals, the February meeting yielded priorities for action, working committees, and a national structure of co-chairs and contacts.

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Karen Thompson



DIVINE 1946-88

Judge slaps eight of "State House 14"

Convicted vow to appeal, while civil suit against violent cops is planned

By Chris Bull

BOSTON — A Municipal Court judge on March 4 convicted eight of the fourteen lesbian and gay rights protesters on trial for trespassing at the Massachusetts State House and fined each of the convicted \$100. Several of the protesters told *GCN* that Judge Walter J. Hurley was biased against them and that they would appeal the decision.

The demonstrators were arrested on Jan. 4, when several hundred gay men and lesbians converged on the State House to protest inaction by the State Senate on the gay rights bill. (See *GCN* Vol. 15, No 25) Several members of Boston's MASS ACT OUT handcuffed themselves to chairs in the Senate viewing gallery as an act of non-violent civil disobedience. Senate president William Bulger called a 30-minute recess during the demonstration to allow State House security guards — known as court officers — to arrest the protesters.

Camilla Graham, Si Christian, Ray Drew, Jean McCray, Anthony Watson, and Ann D. Canavan were found not guilty because arresting officers in their sworn testimony were unable to place them in the Senate gallery at the time of the protest. French Wall, John Hernandez, Rob Gale, Kelly Ready, David Hamburger, Julia Leigh, Richard Hospodar and a woman who wished not to be identified were convicted of the trespassing charge.

Hurley refused to allow defense attorney Katherine Triantifillou to present a "necessity" defense in the case, in which she would have argued that breaking the law was justified on the grounds that the protesters risked greater harm if the state's lawmakers refused to grant gay men and lesbians equal rights under the law. The necessity defense is considered relatively rare, although students at Brown University recently used it successfully to justify civil disobedience against CIA recruiters on cam-

pus.

Hurley told the protesters they had not exhausted their alternatives, including "the ballot box."

According to several of the demonstrators, Hurley continually disregarded Triantifillou's arguments — once cutting her off mid-sentence to call a recess — and helped District Attorney Robert Feeny question witnesses.

"It was clear that the judge was planning to convict us from the minute he walked into the room," said convicted protester David Hamburger. "He assumed we were guilty. He only let the six off because the Commonwealth presented such a shoddy case." Anthony Watson, found not guilty, accused the prosecutor and judge of collusion. "He [Hurley] had a suspicious amount of information about the court officers. And he even seemed to know the family of one of them. I think it was unethical for him to preside over the case," he said.

Jean McCray called Hurley "homophobic. If it had been a group of veterans protesting a cut in benefits he [Hurley] would have responded differently."

Court officers, many of whom may be defendants in the civil suit, were only able to identify eight of the fourteen accused. Feeny tried to convict the other six by presenting the court with photographs of demonstrators taken during the booking process. Hurley was not persuaded by the photos and asked Feeny, "How do we know some officer with a sense of humor didn't grab someone in the corridor for booking?"

The court officers, in the identification process, confused the gender of at least one protester and seemed uncertain about several others. Triantifillou said that she declined to cross examine the court officers

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Quote of the week

"It would probably be a good way of thinning out the population so we wouldn't have to build more prisons."

— Iowa state Rep. Virgil Corey (R-Morning Sun) explaining to the Des Moines Bureau why prisoners ought to "be allowed to spread [AIDS] amongst themselves."

Don't count on labels

SEATTLE, WA — The use of biohazard labels on blood samples may actually raise the risk of health care workers' exposure to the HIV and hepatitis B viruses "by fostering complacency in the handling of unlabelled specimens," according to a study published in the *Journal of the American Medical Association*.

The study, conducted by H. Hunter Handsfield and colleagues, examined blood samples submitted to the Harborview Medical Center's clinical chemistry laboratory. The results showed that one third of HIV-positive samples and over 70 percent of samples from people infected with HIV were not labelled as biohazardous. Consequently, "the absence of a label was not a reliable indication of a non-infectious specimen."

The researchers suggest "that all clinical and laboratory personnel should handle all blood specimens as if they were infected," regardless of the labelling, and they further recommend "that biohazard labelling not be employed to denote specimens from patients with HBV or HIV infection."

□ Jose A. Padilla



Rock star Sting censored on Clause 28

LONDON — Britain's pop music community has joined the voices of protest against Clause 28, which makes it illegal for government agencies to "promote" homosexuality. The law is open to broad interpretation and could threaten AIDS education, performances by gay artists or the exposure of any gay-positive message in any media.

International star Sting taped an acceptance speech in New York for his Best British Album prize in the British Phonographic Institute (BPI) Awards, similar to the American Grammys.

He told *New Musical Express (NME)* "I was asked to make a short speech, so I decided to write something about Clause 28. I said that I was proud to accept an award from the British Phonographic Institute because I was proud to be British, and one of the reasons why was because we generally treat our minorities reasonably well, at least in comparison with the rest of the world. Certainly the way we accept homosexuals has been an example to other countries, and I said that I wanted to accept the award in a spirit of tolerance and goodwill, a spirit that Clause 28 put under threat."

At the awards ceremony five days after Sting taped the acceptance speech, an edited version was broadcast with all references to Clause 28 excised.

Other British stars were given the chance to speak out against the government action in *NME* without the threat of censorship.

Hanif Kuriesh, writer of the films *My Beautiful Laundrette* and *Sammy and Rosie Get Laid* said, "This Government is shameless in its contempt for minorities of all kinds and...represents only the beginning of Thatcher's assault on non-conformity...." Up-and-coming Irish rock star Sinead O'Connor said "Clause 28 is obnoxious, unreasonable and fascist." Neil Tennant of The Pet Shop Boys also called 28 "Fascism," while Boy George implicated the tabloid press for fueling the fires of bigotry. "Shit rags like *The Sun* [a London tabloid] are already printing heavily fascist articles about homosexuals and what's worse no one does fuck all about it. I feel ashamed to call myself British and I'd quite like to plant a bomb in Wapping or force a grenade down Rupert Murdoch's throat," said George.

□ Christopher Wittke

Your tax dollars at work testing for HIV

WASHINGTON — Two years and \$43.1 million after the start of its mandatory AIDS screening program, the Defense Department has found a 0.15% incidence of HIV infection among military personnel and applicants for recruitment.

Out of the 3.96 million people screened since the program began, 5,890 — or 1.5 out of every 1000 — tested positive for HIV according to the *Milwaukee Journal*. This percentage reflects the combined results of tests given to recruit applicants and all active-duty personnel.

The Pentagon initiated the screening program in 1985. Recruit applicants testing positive for antibodies to the virus are not accepted for military service.

□ Mandy Smith

Men indicted in murder of gay man

BUCKS COUNTY, PA — Two men have been indicted for the Dec. 15 murder of Anthony Milano, a gay man.

Milano sometimes frequented a bar called the Edgely Inn, and was murdered just a few blocks away from it. In a preliminary hearing, bartender James Phillips testified that Richard Laird and Frank Chester were acting "rowdy and abusive to customers." One of the two men was overheard as saying, "I hate fucking fags." Phillips said that he warned Milano about Chester and Laird, but that Milano left with the two men after Laird asked for a ride home.

A 17-year-old female friend of the two men testified that Chester talked about the murder the next day.

Authorities believe Chester and Laird killed Milano because they thought he was gay. The two men pled not guilty to charges of first degree murder, aggravated assault, recklessly endangering the life of another, and conspiracy, but District Justice Chris Ritter found that there was sufficient evidence to try the men. The trial will probably begin in April.

□ Lori Kenschaft

Deaf students just say no to hearing president at Gallaudet

WASHINGTON — Students at the world's only liberal arts university exclusively for the deaf shut down the school March 7 to protest the hiring of a president who is hearing. Likening the appointment to selecting a white president for an all-Black college, students at Gallaudet University added that hiree Elisabeth Ann Zinser has had no experience in the deaf community and does not know American Sign Language.

The students, along with supportive faculty and staff, halted classes and blocked the entrance to the school. They presented a list of demands to Gallaudet's Board of Trustees, the body which hires the university president. The protesters demanded the appointment of the first deaf president, and called for the resignation of the Board Chair Jane Bassett Spilman. They also demanded

that the number of deaf trustees be increased to a majority; currently four of twenty trustees are deaf.

Spilman told the protesters Zinser was chosen because she "is a uniquely talented educator who would best lead Gallaudet as we face challenging times." Zinser holds degrees in educational psychology, management and nursing. She was selected from three finalists, the other two of whom are deaf: Harvey Corson, Superintendent of the Louisiana School for the Deaf, and I. King Jordan, Gallaudet's Dean of Arts and Sciences.

According to a Gallaudet administrator who wishes not to use her name, the school faculty and staff met March 8 and agreed to support the students in striking until all demands are met. Teachers and administrators plan to register a vote of "no confidence" for the Board and will seek Congressional support for ousting the trustees. Congressional approval may be required since the federal government supplies 85% of the school's funding.

National support for the protest is overwhelming, according to the administrator interviewed, with people flying in from many parts of the country to join the 2,000 blockaders and to plan a March 21 deaf march on Washington. She added that some state schools for the deaf are closing temporarily, in support of the strike.

The administrator explained the powerful momentum behind the action: "This stems from years and years of being put down. The Board here is trying to train deaf people to be successful individuals, at the same time as Chair Spilman is quoted as justifying her selection by saying 'Deaf people are not ready to function in a hearing world.' It is this prejudice that would keep a deaf person from being a good president. There is no question that Zinser would make an excellent president at some school — but not this one."

The administrator added, "For years Jews, women, Blacks, have taken control of their own institutions. It is galling for hearing people to say that after 124 years of the school's existence the deaf cannot run Gallaudet."

□ Laurie Sherman

Gay youth from around the world to meet in Berlin

OSLO, NORWAY — The International Gay and Lesbian Youth Organisation (IGLYO) will hold its fifth international conference in West Berlin, Germany, from July 30 to Aug. 6, 1988.

The theme for the conference will be "Discrimination — The Enemy Within." Participants, who must be 25 years old or younger, will attend a variety of social events and workshops.

IGLYO especially encourages "women, representatives of ethnic minorities, young lesbians and gays from Asia, Africa and Latin America, as well as other under-represented groups" to participate in the conference. Travel subsidies will be available, and contributions to the travel fund are encouraged.

For more information, contact IGLYO-Secretariat at P.O. Box 1305, Vika, N-0112, Oslo 1, Norway.

□ Jennie McKnight

GCN correspondents take note

This month marks the one year anniversary of our move to the wonderful and still sparkingly new offices in Boston's Back Bay. But some folks are still sending us mail to our old (and now demolished) address on Tremont Street. The Post Office will only forward mail for one year, so please update your address files today! If you don't, your letters will be returned or quite possibly delivered to the giant hole in the ground where our old office was. Horrors! Send all mail to GCN 62 Berkeley St., Boston, MA 02116.

□ Jennie McKnight

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Protesters demand freedom for political prisoners

Int'l Women's Day protest

By Emily Rosen

PLEASANTON, CA — Over 300 women from the San Francisco Bay Area mobilized at the Pleasanton Federal Prison and Army Reserve on Sat., March 5 to celebrate International Women's Day. They gathered at Pleasanton to protest the barbaric prison system with a chorus of drum beats, chants and songs. Among their demands were:

- the freedom of political prisoners of war in the United States and around the world
- the shutting down of maximum security "control units," like the one in Lexington, Kentucky, and the one projected to open in Mariana, Florida, which are aimed at breaking down political prisoners
- women's liberation and lesbian liberation.

There are over 100 political prisoners and prisoners of war in the U.S. today, 25 of which are women. These prisoners are fighting for Black, Puerto Rican, and

Native American liberation. They are North American anti-imperialists, sanctuary workers, Ploughshares and anti-nuclear activists. Six of the women are at Pleasanton serving some of the longest sentences in the world. Lucy Rodriguez, Haydee Torres, Dylcia Pagan and Carmen Valentin, four Puerto Rican prisoners of war, were sentenced for seditious conspiracy against the United States. What they are "guilty" of is fighting for the independence of Puerto Rico. Inside Pleasanton too, are Laura Whitehorn and Linda Evans, two North American political prisoners, imprisoned for their actions in solidarity with the Black Liberation Movement.

One highlight of the demonstration was a spirited balloon release that carried a banner saying "Free Our Sisters" over the fence and high above the prison walls where the prisoners may have been able to see it. □

Vermont Senate votes for les/gay rights

By Jose A. Padilla

BURLINGTON, VT — The State Senate on March 4 passed Senate Bill 278, which adds sexual orientation to existing civil rights protection in the areas of housing, employment, public accommodation, insurance and credit. The bill was passed on a third reading by a vote of 17-12 after an earlier vote of 19-11.

The measure is now being considered by the more conservative House, where it may be reassigned to the House Judiciary Committee within the next 2-3 weeks. Advocates of the bill say they are optimistic about its passage, but expect the House vote to be fairly close.

The success of the Senate measure is due

largely to an organized lobbying effort coordinated by the Vermont Coalition of Lesbians and Gay Men, a state-wide umbrella group. A broad-based support was garnered from mainstream groups such as the National Association of Social Workers, the Vermont Chapter of the American Psychiatric Association, the National Lawyers Guild, and various churches. Testimony in favor of passage of the bill included the presentation of evidence of discrimination against gay men and lesbians in Vermont and elsewhere.

Opposition to the rights measure came from evangelical Christian groups, who, ac-

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Arresting the Duke



BOSTON — Shouting "Dump the Duke," and "the whole world is watching," welfare recipients and their supporters staged a citizens' arrest on March 7 of Massachusetts Gov. Michael Dukakis. The demonstrators protested the conditions faced by poor women and children in Massachusetts whose benefits are nearly 30 percent below the poverty line in the state. Nineteen women and one man were dragged out of Dukakis' office by Capitol police officers. "We're here to tell you, Governor Dukakis, you're running for president on the backs, the sweat, tears, debt, and hunger of women and children in this state," Dottie Stevens, a single mother, told the rally of several hundred. Teri Russo, of My Sister's Place, an advocacy center for homeless women and their children, said the state is forcing more women onto the streets. "This must end. We cannot allow women and children to suffer this way any longer. This amounts to women's cry for change," she said. The demonstration was organized by the Coalition For Basic Human Needs.

□Chris Bull

Let us act: Black lesbians and gay men meet

National conference focuses on leadership

By Ollie Lee Taylor

LOS ANGELES — Between 400 and 500 activists from around the country attended a National Black Gay and Lesbian Conference held here during the weekend of Feb. 12 to 14. The gathering, themed "Leadership: What have we learned? What can we share?" brought together Black lesbians and gay men and other activists and nationally prominent figures for a weekend of plenary talks, workshops and cultural events.

Los Angeles Mayor Thomas Bradley welcomed attendees of the conference, which was cosponsored by the Los Angeles Chapter of Black and White Men Together (BWMT) and the National Coalition of Black Lesbians and Gays. Bradley told participants that "the political process can be bent by organized efforts" and to "admit who we are and say why we are proud."

Gilberto Gerald, executive director of the National AIDS Network (NAN), addressed the opening session and outlined some of the major themes of the conference. Gerald said "for ten years we've been getting organized to provide the leadership we need," which must address for Black gay men and lesbians:

- incorporation into the Black community,
- a rededication to oppose racism, sexism, classism and homophobia,
- the building of support for gay and lesbian activities, and
- strategies for dealing with AIDS.

Danny Blackwell, founder and president of the Brotherhood Crusade stressed the need for Black activism in efforts to halt the spread of AIDS. He also encouraged participants to work to build coalitions to address desperate economic conditions facing Black communities, saying "This is a threatening time to be by yourself."

The opening evening of the conference ended with a performance by lesbian poet Pat Parker. She included in her reading the moving "An Act of Perversion," and "Gays Shouldn't Be Blatant," which parodies rampant heterosexuality.

There were five workshop sessions during the conference which gave participants a chance to talk about issues from political organizing to personal career tips. How to be an effective lobbyist, run an electoral campaign, and manage a business were among the topics conferees could take on in a workshop setting.

Saturday's workshop schedule was followed by evening addresses by civil rights activist and writer Angela Davis and lesbian activist Deborah Johnson. Davis told the audience that "these are threatening times," which require the unity of Black gay men and women. "In 1988," she said, "without the contributions of gay and lesbian sisters and brothers, we would not be as a people where we are today." Davis also said the issue of sexism within the Black gay movement must be examined and challenged.

Johnson reiterated the leadership theme of the conference, saying that leadership is responsible for "holding the vision, setting the pace, offering the example" for change. She also urged those present to "be good" to themselves. "The movement is not made better off by one's loneliness, impoverishment and certainly not by your resentment. Support each other's rejuvenation process."

Several speakers also offered remarks at a benefit luncheon for the National Minority AIDS Council (NMAC). Lesbian Pat Norman gave a passionate talk about the intensity and urgency of AIDS organizing in Black communities. "AIDS is the most anxiety producing, explosive issue," she said. She criticized the racism Black lesbians and gay men face from part of the gay community and the homophobia they face from part of the Black community.

Phil Wilson, co-chair of BWMT Los Angeles, criticized AIDS Project LA for running a five-dollar ad in the conference program. He said the Project has the largest budget of any AIDS support organization in the country, yet declined to sponsor a table at either of the weekend's banquets.

Wilson spoke also about the particular isolation and lack of support facing Black people with AIDS (PWAs). "Black PWAs are abused because people don't care," he charged. In the most emotional moment of

NATIONAL
BLACK
GAY & LESBIAN
CONFERENCE
FEBRUARY 12 — 14, 1987

the conference, he asked PWAs and those whose significant others were afflicted to step forward. Twenty-one did so as the audience hushed. After a few moments passed, applause rang out.

The conference, without dissent, went on record as supporting the Presidential campaign of Jesse Jackson, who addressed the conference via speaker telephone from New Hampshire.

Wilson, in his closing remarks to the conference, said, "The only time we have is now. The only time to do is now. Blacks are being told the time is not right. We are not broken and divided. We now know who we are. The movement and power are ours. Let us act." □

Timothy Scott, Broadway performer, dies of AIDS

By Michael Bronski

LOS ANGELES — Timothy Scott, who gained fame by creating and performing the role of Mr. Mistofffoles in the Broadway musical *Cats*, died Feb. 24 of complications due to AIDS. He was 32.

Born in Morton Grove, Illinois, Scott began his career dancing in the St. Louis Municipal Opera. He later moved to New York where he appeared in *No, No, Nanette*, which he also toured with nationally. He was featured in other New York productions of *A Chorus Line*, *King of Hearts* and *Dancin'*. In 1980-81 Scott toured with the mimes Shields and Yarnell in addition to appearing in many television specials — including the 1980 Academy Awards show. He continued to branch out from theater performance and had begun a career in film acting, appearing in *A Chorus Line* and *Captain Eo*, the high tech, 3-D film produced by Walt Disney Productions for its theme parks.

At a time when an AIDS diagnosis is still often hidden and thought by many to be something to be ashamed of, Scott was open about his illness and insisted that it appear in his obituaries.

He is survived by his long-term lover Norman Buckley.

□filed from Boston

Correction

The article "Pressing the Candidates on AIDS" in Vol. 15, No 31, should have said that presidential candidate Paul Simon did not cast a vote in the Senate's passage of the Helms amendment limiting federal funding for AIDS educational materials.

GCN welcomes all letters to the editor except personal attacks. Carbon copies of letters sent elsewhere are printed on a space-available basis. The opinions expressed here are those of the author and are not intended to represent the views of the GCN membership. Letters must be TYPED, DOUBLE-SPACED AND NO LONGER THAN THREE PAGES. Send to: Community Voices, GCN, 62 Berkeley St., Boston, MA 02116.

Finding real people on the inside

Dear GCN:

I am writing in reference to a letter to the editor criticizing the prisoner project. My basic idea in writing to penpals was to learn to communicate with others. I have found some real people on the "inside," and several real "users." What I have lost in dollars, I have gained ten-fold in confidence in myself and a real enjoyment of reaching out.

Keep up this good work. The best I can do now is to say thank you!

Yours Truly,
Merrill Culver
Houston, TX

More reader support for prisoner project

Dear GCN:

I just wanted to add my two cents worth to the debate about supporting prisoners. I have been writing to my current prison pen pal for about three years and he has never asked me for anything like money. I have also written to others in the past and had the same positive experience.

I think these objections people are expressing sound like the prejudices of yuppie types. Any of us could end up in prison during a witch-hunt of gays.

Please keep up your support of our gay brothers and sisters in prison.

Jeff Keith
Philadelphia, PA

Higher journalistic goals

Dear GCN:

As a journalist, I recognize the constant struggle we face maintain accuracy, but Michael C. Botkin's "hindsight" article of your January 31-February 6 edition of *Gay Community News* comes awfully close to pure fiction.

Twice Botkin states that Chicago's lesbian and gay newspapers have never acknowledged one another. That is completely false. *Windy City Times* has written on several occasions about *Chicago Outlines*, the first being the announcement of their new publication even before *Outlines* appeared on the streets.

When Tracy Baim "walked out" as editor of *Windy City*, she did not lead "most of the editorial staff." The overwhelming majority of our staff is still writing for *Windy City*.

Concerning *Outlines'* advertising policy, Botkin wrongly reported, that I "denounced the policy as outright censorship and bad business." That I have never done.

In a published letter, I admonished *Outlines* for their October 1, 1987 editorial in which Baim stated that phone connection line advertising promoted "junk food sex." Many here in Chicago believe that Baim still owes the gay male community an apology for that unwarranted attack.

I received many words of thanks from gays and lesbians in Chicago for calling Baim on two points: her callous and condescending use of the above phrase, and for lying to her readers in an editorial by stating that *Outlines* had been approached by many phone connection line advertisers. The truth still remains that the majority of those advertisers have deemed *Outlines* ineffective in reaching the gay male market. It is also a fact that *Outlines* continued to solicit their advertising long after Baim slandered them.

As to *Outlines'* advertising policy, I have offered no public opinion — up until now. I harbour no objections to their "stated" policy, which, coincidentally, isn't all that much different from the advertising policies of *Gay Chicago* and *Windy City*.

Apart from the misstatements of fact, the underlying tone of Botkin's story is what most concerns those of us who strive toward

the accurate, responsible journalism our community deserves. The insinuation that lesbian and gay newspapers "go at it," implies that because we are gay and lesbian, we feud. What has taken place in the Chicago gay press is healthy competition — a strong motivating factor in pursuing the highest possible standard of journalistic excellence.

For that reason, I am sorry to report that *Chicago Outlines* has ceased weekly publication and has gone to a monthly format (which marks yet another major inaccuracy in Botkin's story). Although this may mean little to Chicago gay and lesbian readers, it means that we at *Windy City Times* have lost a direct competitor and will have to rely on other motivating factors to reach higher journalistic goals.

One of those goals — which Mr. Botkin might want to consider incorporating into his own journalistic efforts — is accuracy.

Sincerely,
J.H. Johnson
OUTSPEAK columnist and reporter,
Windy City Times
Chicago, IL

Gay and green

Dear GCN:

Now that St. Patrick's Day is approaching (March 17th), I suggest that we all wear green. You see, this year it falls on a Thursday. As Judy Grahn points out in her book, *Another Mother Tongue*, in certain subcultures wearing green on Thursday marked one as gay or lesbian. Well! So, if anyone asks you, "Are you Irish?", and should you not be so, take care to patiently explain the proud historical link between green and gay, being sure to add, "But I thought that was why *you* were wearing green!"

We can educate *and* make a fashion statement at the same time. (Certain parts of Boston may never be the same again!)

Love,
Jan R. Fielding
Revere, MA

They look so adorable in their hair nets!

Dear GCN:

Last night I sent 'Dear Abby' a letter (similar to the one you printed as 'PWARC on solo status' several weeks ago). I will keep you updated. Meanwhile, here the staff is so intent on wearing gloves and masks when they serve us meals that I sent a memo around the other day and now they're wearing hair nets as well. They are seething over it, but they all look so "adorable"!

I'm getting a clock for this unit that is visible to us prisoners since they tell me that some of my claims can't be 'substantiated' because I don't know what time they happened at (exactly!). I am keeping a journal now and may use it to write a book. Shall I call it *One Flew Into the Cuckoo's Nest*?

I've learned that here it's important to do everything in triplicate, as things are easily 'lost', and to leave my personal 'feelings' off my requests as that just clouds the issues. Maybe this information can help others in the same situation.

Thanks ever so much,
James Magner
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Letters to Amnesty International needed

Dear GCN:

A letter-writing campaign to Amnesty International has been launched on behalf of three prisoners who are serving ridiculously long sentences in prison for breaking "age of consent" laws. The three people are: Karl Ahlers, 82A4134, Drawer B, Stormville, NY 12582; Raymond Latham, 954 Forrest St, Baltimore, MD 21202; Robert Butler, Box 607, Carson City, NV 89701.

All three cases are similar. Besides being sentenced to extremely long sentences, none of the three has ever been accused of doing anything wrong by the people involved. EVERY accusation was made by the police. There was no rape, kidnapping, force or injury of any kind. All of the witnesses were threatened in the midst of a media witch-hunt campaign around 1980. In all three cases the so-called "victims" and their families continue to maintain contact with

Gay Community News is produced by a collective dedicated to providing coverage of events and news in the interest of gay and lesbian liberation. The collective consists of a paid staff of eleven, a general membership of volunteers, and a board of directors elected by the membership.

Opinions reflected in "editorials" represent the views of the paid staff collective. Signed letters and columns represent the views and opinions of the authors only. We encourage all readers to send us comments, criticism, and information, and to volunteer and become members.

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these men and want them out of prison. Karl, age 55, was sentenced to 48 years; Ray, 70, to 43 years; and Bob, 50, to 23 CONSECUTIVE LIFE SENTENCES, for a longterm relationship with one boy. Letters urging Amnesty to accept these three cases as well as others similar to them may be sent to: George Siemens, Research Coordinator, Amnesty International, Box 1478, 1000 BL, Amsterdam, The Netherlands. The prisoners involved would appreciate copies of letters sent if possible. The postage is 44¢ to Europe. Thank you.

Karl Ahlers
Stormville, NY

Thanks for being out there

Dear *GCN*: I would like to thank Michael Callen and Jane Rosett of New York's PWA Coalition for their help with the conclusion of my series, "Battles Joined." Although ill with pneumonia, Jane very kindly developed and Fed Ex'd the print of the lesbian PWA and her lover which appeared with the last article. If it is true that pictures say a thousand words, Jane's photo should contrast well with the line that lesbians don't get AIDS. Thanks again to Jane, and to the women in the photograph — Sharon and Kathy — for being out there for all to see.

Sincerely,
Marea Murray
Allston, MA

Where DO children pick up homophobic ideas?

The following is excerpted from a letter sent to Kellogg's Department of Consumer Affairs.

Sirs: For over twelve years my significant other and I have been regular consumers of Kellogg's products, particularly of your Special K cereal. Not any more. We will not be purchasing any Kellogg's products in the future. Nor will many of our friends and acquaintances. The reason for our decision is the fact that you continue to air the offensive final segment of your current Nut n' Honey TV commercial; I refer to the sequence in which a loveable old cattle drive cook is threatened with death by his gun-toting trailmates when they believe he has called one of them "honey." Others have written to complain to you about this segment. I know, because I have seen their letters reproduced in at least three gay newspapers, in Boston and San Francisco. The situation has also been much discussed by gay columnists. Yet you continue to air the commercial intact. I can only conclude that you have nothing but contempt for offended consumers like myself.

I have been stirred to write to you at this particular time because of a murder which occurred here in San Francisco recently. A teenage male viciously stabbed his gay neighbor to death, using a long sharp kitchen knife. His reason: the neighbor has allegedly made a pass at him. (I say allegedly because there were no witnesses, and the deceased cannot speak for himself).

This motivation has been used as a defense many many times when a gay man has been brutally killed; a presumably straight man is perfectly justified in murdering any man who makes a real or imagined pass at him.

In this case, even the judge bought into the argument. While begrudgingly finding the youth guilty of "manslaughter," he commented that the murder victim's "reprehensible behavior was partly responsible for his death."

And that's exactly the attitude presented in your commercial — if another man calls you honey, pull a gun on him. The fact that this is presented as "light humor" is all the more insidious, by making the impending violence seem cute and completely normal. Why don't you show the next scene, in which Cookie's head is blown to bits?

And the really ugly fact is that the teenage killer reacted exactly like those cowboys in your commercial. Where DO children pick up such ideas?

You probably assume the gay community in America makes up only an insignificant portion of your consumers. In this I suspect you are mistaken. We can hold a grudge a long, long time.

I would appreciate a reply.

Regards,
Steven Saylor
San Francisco, CA

Nauseating cigarettes, mind-dulling booze

Dear *GCN*: Over the past eleven years I have visited scores of gay bars and baths from San Diego to New York City, from Minneapolis to Houston. As a devoted holistic health enthusiast, I despise the nauseating cigarette smoke stench, the mind-dulling rivers of booze and the all-too-common clonish, unromantic disco and new wave music.

How tragic that many gay men turn to dangerous poppers to restore some of their sexual prowess destroyed by cigarettes, booze, other drugs, junk food, nutritional deficiencies and lack of exercise, sunshine and sleep.

I long for gay places with no smoke, no booze, no poppers and no junk food — sunlit by day, candles and fireplaces by night. Simple places where life, light, health, physical fitness, optional nudity, romance and deep conversation are pursued and celebrated. Where reasonably-priced natural foods are served. Places with a wonderful variety of music — Reggae, Strauss Waltzes, Latino love songs, gospel, soul, slow country-western, Beethoven concertos, Mediterranean melodies, Verdi operas and 60's rock.

I prize certain scenes from European-made erotic movies, where the men passionately make love to each other with tender kissing, hugging, holding and stroking included. So many American sex movies show almost mechanical genital sex, largely devoid of romance and personality. I crave profound Romeo and Roger love stories combined with explicit lovemaking.

Don Schrader
Dakota, IL

GCN Job Openings

■ **ART DIRECTOR** (available mid-April): Maintain overall design of the paper and oversee the layout and proofreading functions on production night. Design centerspreads and cover graphics (or assign to volunteer artists), weekly display advertising, as well as promotional materials, pamphlets, etc. **Qualifications:** Strong graphic design skills. Familiarity with type specification, paste-up, knowledge of offset mechanical production and printing techniques, and previous related experience preferred, but training is available.

■ **COORDINATING EDITOR:** (available late April): Coordinate paper's overall administrative/financial affairs and fundraising activities. Prepare editorial/letters pages. Serve as liaison with board, and, as necessary, serve as paper's spokesperson/representative. **Qualifications:** Strong administrative, organizational, interpersonal and fundraising skills. Familiarity with *GCN* preferable.

All *GCN* positions require a commitment to gay/lesbian liberation, feminism, anti-racism, an awareness of class issues, and a commitment to the collective decision-making process.

Salary/benefits: All positions pay \$200/week and include health/life insurance, routine health care through Fenway Community Health Center, sick leave, and four weeks paid vacation. *GCN* offers staff members responsibility for their own jobs, with flexibility and ample room for innovation.

■ **FREELANCE, PART-TIME TYPESETTER:** Coordinate the paper's revenue-producing, outside typesetting business. **Responsibilities:** Typeset outside work and schedule other typesetters; oversee and develop the business; keep staff informed. **Qualifications:** Good typesetting skills, preferably on a Compugraphic Editwriter 7500, and strong organizational skills with attention to detail. Familiarity with *GCN* strongly preferred. Knowledge of progressive movements helpful. **Hours:** 20 + /month (evenings, Friday, or weekends). **Salary:** \$8-10/hour with some benefits.

To apply for these positions, please send resume and cover letter by **March 31** to *GCN* Job Search Committee, 62 Berkeley St., Boston, MA 02116.

Female genital mutilation

By Hannah Edemikpong

The following is a letter sent from the Women's Centre in West Africa to a number of individuals and organizations in the United States.

The campaign we launched against AIDS and the practice of female genital mutilation in November 1986 has reached one year of age. The campaign was launched because of the staggering number of AIDS carriers in Africa. The overwhelming majority of Western victims are male homosexuals and intravenous drug users, but the situation in Africa is different, where the majority are women.

Recent research findings have confirmed that the practice of female genital mutilation opens genital sores and as a result of these operations — as well as other sexual practices by men that result in lacerations in the genital area — an easy gateway is provided for Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) and other sexually transmitted diseases to enter the bloodstream.

The campaign was prompted by our profound belief that most of our African women are suffering under ignorance and are dying of disease because of the lack of practical information accessible to them. Apart from our raising the issues of female genital mutilation and AIDS at international conferences, there has been little or no local initiative to stop these practices and to address AIDS.

As a self-help non-governmental women's organization with limited funds, our greatest problem has been the lack of funds to run the campaign. We made appeals to feminist and women's organizations in the U.S. to come to our aid. Through this support we have been able to cover over 100,000 square kilometers of our countryside and have met with five million rural women whom we dissuaded from the practice of female genital mutilation.

We have also contacted two million women by radio and television and another one million by newspaper and literature. Arrangements have also been completed for the launching of the campaign in other African countries in 1988 if we have enough financial support from our friends.

I wish on behalf of myself and all our women to express our profound appreciation to all who concerned yourselves with our plight, in the interest in international feminism. We have been very much encouraged by your support and solidarity in our uphill task towards the emancipation of our women from ignorance and disease. We hope you will continue to support us by helping to raise \$25,000 for our 1988 campaign.

To send donations or gather more information, please write: Hannah Edemikpong, Women's Centre, Box 185, Eket, Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria, West Africa.

Natural actions in a warped world

By Rex Wockner

The men and women who make a living writing what you so kindly read here each week are probably some of the luckiest queers around in 1988 America. We're something akin to 100-percent out of the closet and have lived to flaunt it in the newspaper. But today, I realized yet again how far I still have to go; coming out is anything but a one-time process.

Jack (we share a futon) and I were out walking the pooch and a car turned a corner onto our street. Without thinking, we took

our arms from around each other's waists. Something ingrained told us that assumed heterosexuals in a beat-up Pinto mustn't see two men in love at the corner of Elm and Birch.

When we consciously think about it, Jack and I can sometimes overcome this reaction. I've noticed, for example, that we reserve a bottom-line right to kiss each other hello in airports, even in small towns and foreign countries. I don't even look any longer to see if anyone is watching.

Not looking, though, doesn't alter the complex social interplay a public-kiss initiates. The airport peck remains a daring and bold socio-political, leftist, "anti-family," "commie-pinko-fag," 50,000 watt, clear-channel statement. My friend Joe smooched me good-bye outside a Chinese restaurant last week and several older ladies milling about nearly had cardiac arrest.

This cause and effect makes my public kisses anything but *pure* — miles, psychologically, from the simple act of a man putting his arm around a woman as they watch the gorillas at the zoo. When I touch Jack at the zoo, my mental computer retrieves the information that we are about to become a threatening public display.

There is not much Jack and I can do to prevent our personal acts from being political statements (and in the current climate, depoliticizing our acts is not desirable anyway). I must accept that rubbing Jack's nubs or hugging his tummy constitutively include a loud statement supporting the gay liberation movement. Maybe on Castro Street a snuggle is *closer* to spontaneous, but elsewhere it comes complete with full knowledge of its radicalness.

Still, the bottom line remains: The radical nature of being ourselves in Reagan's America does not relieve us of the responsibility for trying. It has to be the case that one day the first two men who *ever* touched each other in public in San Francisco did so. Prior to that moment, no public display of homosexual affection had occurred in the history of the San Francisco gay rights movement.

The same evolution must occur in St. Louis, New Haven, Rochester and Colorado Springs. We are everywhere, I've heard, and we will be free. The day has to come when a Pinto turning the corner will have as much significance for Jack and me as it does for non-gay people.

But before that day arrives, I must do two things: force myself to presuppose (*and make it second nature*) that I have a right to be spontaneous, and then accept that being myself involves "flaunting it." Today I reaffirm this right and reaccept the label of "Flaunter." Our public displays of affection (whether overtly or accidentally political) contribute immeasurably to the battle of our liberation. And the speed at which we win our liberation is going to vary in direct proportion to our degree of visibility.

Rex Wockner is a Chicago-based activist and writer. His essays appear regularly in Chicago Outlines.

"Speaking Out" is part of our continuing effort to provide a true forum of opinion for the community. We encourage you to send your ideas, feelings and comments to us, and to respond to ideas expressed in this space. The opinions expressed are those of the author and are not intended to represent the views of the GCN membership. Submissions must be TYPED, DOUBLE-SPACED, AND NO LONGER THAN FIVE PAGES. Send to: Speaking Out, GCN, 62 Berkeley St., Boston, MA 02116.

Membership Update

Important note to all ongoing volunteers: our membership mailing list, quite outdated already, has been partially chewed up by our friendly computer. If you are still interested in receiving monthly minutes, announcements of membership meetings and board election ballots, please drop a note to GCN or call ASAP, telling us your name, address and phone number. Contact: GCN Membership, 62 Berkeley St., Boston, MA 02116 (617) 426-4469.



Chloe Leamon as Martha (L) and Mary Athanis as Karen in **The Children's Hour**

Hellman back where she belongs

A fine production of The Children's Hour by Boston's Triangle Theater Co.

The Children's Hour. By Lillian Hellman. Directed by Lisa Wenzel. Presented by the Triangle Theater Co, featuring Mary Athanis, Chloe Leamon, Mary-Beth Hagarty, Barbara Dooneief Haas, and Chris Blanche. At the Triangle Theater in Boston. Thurs.-Sat. through March 19.

By Paul Dixon

The Triangle deserves a gold star! First, for taking Lillian Hellman out of the classroom and putting her back onstage where she belongs. Second, for reminding Boston theatregoers about the difference between *good* theatre and *great* theatre.

The Children's Hour, Lillian Hellman's intense 1934 drama, tells the story of a young woman who falsely accuses her two teachers of having a lesbian affair and details the devastating effects of that lie on the teachers' lives.

Director Lisa Wenzel emphasizes the essentials of theatre: simplicity and strong acting. She keeps the production basic and allows her actors and script to unfold naturally. Nearly every cast member is perfect for his or her role, and Wenzel directs them fluidly. Her efforts culminate in a realistic and gripping production.

As for the cast members, they give outstanding performances. Chloe Leamon's portrayal of Martha, one of the teachers, is brilliant; when she enters, she *is* Martha. As Karen, the other teacher, Mary Athanis also gives a solid performance. She is compassionate with her students and loving with her fiancé, detached and confused when her

world falls apart.

Mary-Beth Hagarty, as the evil child who accuses her teachers, is as frightening as she should be. One moment she's claiming to have a heart attack as an excuse to skip class; the next, she's intimidating her classmates to go along with her lies; and then, she's kissing up to her grandmother to get what she wants. Hagarty is wonderful to watch as she worms and squirms her way around the facts and the other characters.

Portraying the nasty student's grandmother and the school's leading benefactor, Mrs. Tilford, Barbara Dooneief Haas does justice to her role. Haas' basso and sympathetic voice are ideal for this protecting grandmother and pillar of the community. Chris Blanche, as Lily Mortar, also holds her own onstage. While she starts out a bit slow, she quickly warms up to become the play's most amusing character. Faith Justice in the role of Mrs. Tilford's maid, Agatha, gives an enjoyable performance and has a great deal of stage presence despite the fact she does not appear often in the production.

The cast does, however, suffer one weakness. Steven O'Donnell seems completely miscast in the role of Joe, Karen's fiancé. He seems uncomfortable onstage and his delivery lacks compassion, resulting in a bland and often stiff interpretation.

All the action takes place on Craig Carter's earthy set with Steve Weiss' soft lighting; this apparently warm, safe environment provides an effective foil to the cold actions.

So put on your jogging shoes and run down to the *Children's Hour* before it ends. □

Vermont

Continued from page 3

cording to observers, were very vocal during the six-hour hearings last February. These groups are expected to be more active when the bill goes to the House, as was the case last year when the legislators were considering a similar measure.

The bill has received wide and favorable media coverage. Local newspapers, the *Burlington News* and the *Montpelier Times Argus*, have published editorials favoring its passage. Additionally, the bill has received the endorsement of Gov. Madeleine Kunin, who has indicated she will sign the bill if approved.

Attorney Heather Wishik, one of the key advocates of the measure, expressed her pleasure at the bi-partisan support, and added "the Senate vote has been a major victory for Vermont, which historically has been a frontrunner in the protection of civil rights."

□filed from Boston

State House

Continued from page 1

because the judge "was not open to listening to a necessity defense or technical arguments." She said the appeal to a district court would entail a jury trial, which could help the protesters' chances.

THE CHILDREN'S HOUR

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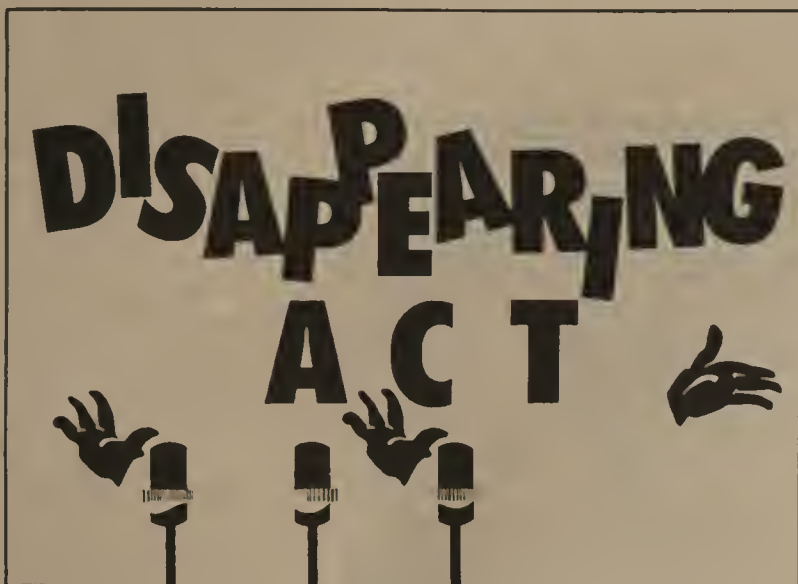
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Brad Davis as Querelle in **Querelle**



Fassbinder relaxing on the set of **Querelle**

Opinionated genius

Boston film fest serves up Fassbinder the outspoken leftist, Fassbinder the unabashed homosexual

Fassbinder Film Festival. At The Brattle Theatre in Harvard Square. Cambridge, Mass. Film every Weds. through April. For full schedule, call 876-6837.

By Michael Bronski

You don't go to see a Rainer Werner Fassbinder film to relax and forget your troubles. Like Fassbinder himself, the movies are opinionated, sometimes wrong-headed, certainly flamboyant, and often close to genius. As an outspoken leftist and unabashed homosexual, he not only shocked the mainstream movie world, but also disturbed those on the left and in the gay movement. The Brattle Theatre will be showing 16 of the most famous Fassbinders — at the time of his death at age 36 in 1982, he had completed 41 feature films — in this special festival screening.

When discussing Fassbinder as a gay filmmaker, the impulse is to look at the films that have gay characters — *Fox and His Friends*, *The Bitter Tears of Petra von Kant*, *Querelle* or *In a Year of Thirteen Moons*. But this would be short-sighted since almost all of his films exhibit — to some degree — what might be thought of as a gay sensibility. His leftist views also imbue more than just the "political" films such as *The Third Generation*, *Ali — Fear Eats The Soul*, or *Katzelmacher*. Fassbinder's body of work forms an amazingly consistent, sustained vision of the world.

To a large degree this vision is not a happy one. Although Fassbinder might call himself a leftist (in European terms, not American) he more often than not sees his characters being crushed by social forces rather than overcoming them. Sometimes he even sees leftist political groups, or ideologies, crushing them. And although he was openly homosexual he was more than willing to show not only how difficult being gay might be, but also how horribly gay people might act towards one another. Many of the films end on a note of despair, though his ultimate vision is one of social progress — impeded by human ignorance, stupidity, greed and prejudice.

Take *Fox and His Friends*. When the film first opened at the New York Film Festival (in the mid-1970s) it was picketed by gay liberationists who saw it as homophobic. Fox (played by Fassbinder himself) is a German working-class gay man who wins a great deal of money in a lottery, and is suddenly taken in as a lover by the son of a pretentious middle-class family whose business is in danger of collapse. Fox and his lover soon spend all of his money on the accoutrements of upper-middle-class status — antiques, trips to Northern Africa, expensive dinner parties — and in keeping the family business going. Fox never fits in with his lover's friends, and never really understands why money *doesn't* bring social acceptance. The family business fails, Fox gets blamed and the couple breaks up. His money gone, Fox returns to his old friends and haunts. He eventually finds that he does not fit in there anymore (they consider him a class traitor) and dies of an accidental drug overdose.

All in all not exactly a picture of gay unity. Many gay people are rightfully suspicious of an analysis that says "But it's

about class, not homosexuality"; this has been used to justify any number of abominations — artistic and otherwise — against homosexuals and women. But in the case of *Fox and His Friends*, the target is class structure. Fassbinder, however, does not allow any easy sympathies. Unlike the working class characters of the American proletarian novels of the American '30s, Fox and his working-class family and friends are not particularly likable or noble; they are realistically presented. The upper-class gay men are awful and the lover's family is quite horrible. But at the same time, they are presented as banal. Fassbinder is interested in the nuances of everyday life, in pinpointing the minute horrors of small moments. In doing so, he is also able to find those moments when change is possible, or at least the possibility of change.

If there is an overwhelming feeling between Fassbinder and his audience, it is one of distance. Sometimes it feels as though he has discovered Brecht's theory of the alienation technique and doesn't quite know when to stop using it. For example, Fassbinder doesn't allow us to feel sorry for Fox because he was taken advantage of; instead of experiencing empathy, we are forced to confront the structures that bring about his death. Besides the characterizations and the obscure plot turns, one of the main ways Fassbinder creates this distance is in the *mise en scene*, the film's visual style. Nowhere is this clearer than in *The Bitter Tears of Petra von Kant*. Petra is a chic clothing designer and an even more chic lesbian. She is cold and calculating in her friendships and relationships. Fassbinder films several episodes in her life: getting together with a woman named Karen, attempting to be a mother to a rather taciturn daughter, dealing with her own mother, breaking up with Karen, and finally coming to terms with the s/m relationship she has with her assistant/lover. All of the action takes place in one huge loft room with bizarre paintings all over the walls and all of the women are dressed outlandishly and keep changing clothes throughout the film. The strange set design and weird get-ups further distance the audience from the unlikable characters.

The love of artifice, of visual extravagance, that one sees in Fassbinder has its roots both in the Hollywood films that he grew up with as a boy as well as in a long-standing gay artistic and theatrical tradition. One immediately thinks of the wigs and costumes in *The Bitter Tears of Petra von Kant*, the bold, almost cartoon-like use of color and spaces in *Fox and His Friends*. There is an almost-perfect merging of the gay and Hollywood traditions in *The Marriage of Maria Braun*. Here Fassbinder has transformed the genre of the Hollywood "woman's career/four-hanky cry" film. Maria Braun marries just before the end of WW II. Her husband is at war and she is forced to support herself. When he does return he commits a crime that he goes to prison for and Maria — still deeply in love with him, almost to the point of myopia — pledges to support them both. She is enormously successful in business and so driven by her love for her husband that she is blind to all else. At the film's end she, through her

Continued from page 11

"GREAT SONGS,
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"HILARIOUS AND HEARTFELT!"

—David Ansen, NEWSWEEK

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—Mike Clark, USA TODAY

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I am curious
and concerned
about those
high cheek-boned
red bones
from good families,
Black blue bloods
who would make
you believe
their ancestors' passage
was somehow easier.

I didn't realize
slave ships had
first class cabins.
Did they really have
more leg room?
Did they play shuffle
aboard the deck?
Were their chains
designed by Trifari?
Was their gruel
brought to them
steaming
from the microwave
garnished with
a sprig of parsley?

Tell me, did they show
"Birth of a Nation"
in panovision,
pass out complimentary
copies of *Black Enterprise*
and *Crisis*?
Was there a
frequent flogger program
offering bonuses
at the bit?

When the voyage was
completed
did passengers disembark
clutching Ferragamo purses
and Mark Cross briefcases,
scuttle off to
Delta and Elk's meetings
dropping the youngsters
off at a Jack and Jill
mixer on the way?

Miss Lucy's Voodoo Restaurant

Miss Lucy
took very little
shit
from white folks
at her small time
greasy spoon
good cookin'
restaurant
just far enough
from anything
including West Hell
to make young professionals
think it chi-chi.

Miss Lucy served up
pickled watermelon rinds
wrapped in bacon,
she crab soup,
boudin puddin',
mamou coush-coush,
fever in the kitchen
and more than a few
smart mouthed
white folks
out slumming
for the evening

Miss Lucy smiled
politely and
answered when they
called her girl
shuffled back
to her kitchen

CRUSHING MYTHS BUILDING FRATERNITIES

Poetry by Craig G. Harris

Craig G. Harris is an AIDS activist and writer whose work has appeared in over a dozen lesbian/gay publications and several anthologies. *Inventory Time*, *On Beyond Masochism*, *Classified* and *Miss Lucy's Voodoo Restaurant* are excerpted from the new Black gay poetry anthology, *Tongues Untied* (Gay Men's Press, London, 1987). All other poems are ©1988 by Craig G. Harris.



waved her arthritic hands over her Anacostia black skillet and presented her patrons with tantalizing dishes that enflamed their tastebuds, twisted their intestines, and gave them the overall appearance of her day old smothered chicken.

Miss Lucy is my girl but don't mess with her, a post-modern Petro, she'll slap your effigy in her microwave and press 3 — fry.

February 14

(for Kevin)

Eagerly and innocently you offered to show me around town so we headed toward Pico ended up ghetto surfing at the Catch where I held you for the first time while the singer whispered "Stay, little Valentine, stay..." but I had to go had a flight around dawn and wanted desperately to see you alone in the darkness.

Back at your crib there was no need for maps or directions exploration came naturally hands like waves splashing over my body my tongue tracing your torso I dove into your innocence and lingered in its heat but I had to go had a flight around dawn though I wanted desperately to hold you in the waking of the sun.

We woke the freeway enroute to the airport our eyes only half opened and I wanted to take our quiet to the beach to watch the sun rise stroll along the boardwalk at Venice wrapped in the warmth of your arms of your region but I had to go had a flight to catch in minutes but I wanted desperately to stay with you making each day Valentine's Day.

Inventory Time

The year will soon end. My room has a new face. Shampooed carpet and sunrise bedcovers, Christmas cards on wrapping ribbon hung from the curtain rod I'm sipping beaujolais nouveau and pumping a decade of Joan Armatrading. It is inventory time. In the past year I have done two nine to fives, one six to two, twenty articles, four short stories, three readings, two television shows, six men and a lot of scotch. I have lost my American Express and

Visa charge privileges, five earrings, three contact lenses, my mask, two friends to AIDS, and the innocence of my humor. The New Year will be about revolutions — not resolutions — crushing myths, building fraternities, and loving brothers, loving brothers, loving brothers, loving brothers.

December 24, 1985

Classified

BGA* 30ish well-read sensitive pro-feminist seeks same for envelope licking, flyer distribution, banner assembly, demonstration companion, dialogical theorizing, good times, and hot safe sex.

Why do we go home alone, clutch pillows and journals in single beds, push ourselves to the nth degree for the cause if we can't reap the benefits?

I do not want to wed the movement, do you? End the silence baby. We could make a serious revolution together.

*Black gay activist

KP

Were I quite the guppie or gourmet that dinner had portended the leftovers would have promptly exited via the garbage disposal — which, because I'm not was waiting to be fixed...

Instead I stood before a pot of tri-colored, organic, politically correct fettucini composing a recipe for new wave noodle pudding knowing it would be fierce if I could only recall the ingredients of Aunt Baby's macaroni and cheese bake and remember not to mix dairy with...

Never mind the baby carrots with mango chutney glaze sauteed zucchini with basil dressing and my last two eggs will work well in an omelette carry me through the day if I drink enough coffee you know it cuts the appetite...

Makes you an achiever makes you want to sing about what we gonna do about Biko... about Mandela... about Nkoli... because we who believe in caffeine cannot rest until freedom comes...

So I wrap myself in the security of Saran and Reynold's wondering

if Coretta stands now in her well-appointed kitchen canning peaches.

Alarms

We wake to find we've created our own freedom your southern genitalia drawling, echoing whispers of dreams my red clay thighs shared at most intimate moments.

No one will make our love legitimate except us on days we have not misplaced our aggressions or entertained ludicrous notions of domestic nuclear warfare.

Night Visions

Last night I awoke to the screams of 65 million Afrikans coffled at sea, Timothy Lee hanging from a Concord tree, and a man who couldn't tell his mother about me.

At sunrise I wipe away tears and visions of singed skin and mushroom clouds over Osage Avenue, Tawana Bradley beaten and branded found with the garbage, body turned blue, and a lover who keeps from his kin the secrets they already knew.

My dreams are a chaotic mosaic of red, black, green, and yellow pink triangles in lavender sand graffiti etched by Michael Stewart's bleeding hand and I wake in the arms of a man who thinks I'm too political and doesn't see his silence as a sham.

On Beyond Masochism

Forgive me. I needed refuge from your silent power lighthearted intimidation purple madness on eastside nights when other Bronx boys held slick haired gold toothed teen women squeezing their youthfulness blue gray and you held me from within in a silk stocking ghetto

my tongue wipes you pure and ready is discarded like

used tissue is muted by your knuckles slamming hard against the full of my lips

my tongue licks rubies that would fall from my chin glimmering down the steps of your five floor walk up leaving a trail of jewels to the bus stop

Forgive me. I needed refuge from the constraints of loving you in cramped indigo self-pity recurrent delusions abbreviated ecstasy spaces foreign to my youth closets I evacuated after adolescence.

Natural as Afterbirth

I'm not saying you had to give blessings, throw rice, or pawn your jewels for celebration but I would have thought acknowledgement only appropriate — two names are now announced from my answering machine and I'm no longer able to come home for weekends.

Your long distance discussions of Grandma's lapses into senility and upcoming baptisms avoid the fact that a man has entered my environment and me leaving no room for doubts.

Say the word and we'll gossip like girlfriends about the way these men don't pick up after themselves, snore all up in your face, all night long, but give good loving at the cock's crow.

Or, we could continue — you referring to him as my roommate' me not noticing that you and father sleep in separate beds — denying ourselves a sisterhood natural as afterbirth.

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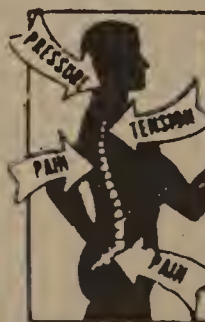
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Kowalski

Continued from page 1

Four areas were defined for national action in the immediate future: outreach, media, fundraising, and direct action.

The fundraising committee will focus on garnering support, both for the Karen Thompson Legal Fund and for the work of the National Committee to Free Sharon Kowalski, through grant proposals and direct mail appeals. Grant money is being sought to hire a staff person for a short time, to handle the massive amount of telephone and paper work currently being done by widely dispersed volunteers and overworked friends of Thompson.

The media committee will develop press materials and assemble a working press list targeted to disability, women's, gay/lesbian, progressive, and mainstream media outlets. Once these short-term goals are accomplished, the committee will develop a strategy to expand the coverage Thompson receives in the mainstream media.

The outreach committee will provide support for new Sharon Kowalski committees and organize efforts to bring the case to a wider range of interested groups and constituencies.

Finally, the direct action committee will dedicate its efforts to celebrating Sharon Kowalski Day Aug. 7 — the day before Kowalski's 32nd birthday. Committee members envision vigils and demonstrations in cities across the country, organized by local committees or individuals with help from the national committee. They will develop an action kit to distribute nationwide, to stimulate planning for a national expression of outrage and support.

In other news about the case, the CBS nighttime news program *W. 57th* is continuing to film in preparation for a segment on the case to be aired in the fall. Presidential candidate Jesse Jackson also recently released a statement in support of Karen Thompson, as well as an issue brief on lesbian/gay rights which refers to the case. The mood among organizers in Minneapolis was one of renewed energy they said, as both the legal struggle and the national organizing move into new phases. The next meeting of the National Committee to Free Sharon Kowalski will be held in June in New York City.

For other information about the case or to donate to the Legal Fund, contact:

- in the East, Cheryl Vitow, 149 Stetson Rd., Piscataway, NJ 08854, (201) 752-5302
- in the Midwest, Dan Lee, 3829 Park So., Minneapolis, MN 55407, (612) 824-2051
- in the West, Alison Mierzykowski, 1730 Arch, Berkeley, CA 94709, (415) 843-2120

Other inquiries should be directed to the co-chairs of the National Committee to Free Sharon Kowalski:

- Tracie Dejanikus, (202) 667-3415; Pamela Slycord, (617) 783-3580.

□ filed from Washington

Genius

Continued from page 7

moral and literal short-sightedness, destroys them both.

This is the same story that Joan Crawford and others made in the 1940s. Its moral — at least in the Hollywood versions — is clear: women should be wives and mothers, not in business and not too much like men. Maria Braun's failure, however, is not that she has become less of a woman but that she insists upon believing in romantic love: her downfall comes because she is traditional, not because she bucks the system. But Fassbinder is not about to leave it at that. About half way through the film — as Maria's costume changes pinpoint not only her economic improvement, but also the growth of post-war German culture — you begin to realize that he is using her to represent all of post-war German economy. Not only is it a devastating critique of German culture and Hollywood films but it is also a sound feminist analysis of both. On top of that, *Maria Braun* is filmed with a beauty rare in any movie.

Fassbinder's Hollywood aesthetics, his gay sensibility, his politicized view of human relationships come together most perfectly and shockingly in his final film, *Querelle*. Based upon the Genet novel, *Querelle* looks like a musical Busby Berkeley might have decided to film on uniform night at the Mineshaft. Sex and violence meld in a tale of two brothers who love one another in a French seaport town that seems to be a cross between a gay bar and a brothel. This is the

sort of town where the Chief of Police wears jeans, no shirt and a leather jacket and all of the workers look like they live in porn movies. Two hours of this makes the town in *Blue Velvet* look like middle America. But perhaps more than in any of his other movies, Fassbinder deals with what it means to be a homosexual in heterosexual society. He does this in a film which is almost entirely populated by gay men and devoid of heterosexuals.

The images of *Querelle* are taken from not only Hollywood films but also from porno iconography, the work of Jean Cocteau, the words of Genet as well as a post-Stonewall gay notion of masculinity. By mixing and matching these sometimes diverse artifacts Fassbinder was able to give the film a look of *modern* homosexuality — not so much post-Stonewall as post-repression. In Genet it is the degradation of *Querelle* that elevates him above other men (a sort of inverted Christ image). This was in keeping with Genet's misanthropic, anti-religious, truly and deeply perverted sexual imagery. Fassbinder makes an important change, it is not *Querelle*'s debasement that saves him but his coming out and accepting himself as a gay man. Fassbinder takes many of Genet's religious overtones and turns them from blasphemy into camp. In a certain way he has diminished the complexity of the novel, but he has also politicized it, making *Querelle* not only more palatable to contemporary tastes, but also more meaningful. The class analysis that can be seen in many of the other films is not missing here, but is rather transformed into sexual and gender classes instead of economic ones.

It is important to keep in mind that everything Fassbinder did was profoundly influenced by his identity as a member of the German post-war generation. References to this occur in all of the films — the portraits of the German Chancellors at the end of *Maria Braun*, the specific German bourgeois lifestyle in *Fox*, even the Nazi-like implications in some of the uniforms in *Querelle*. These references are so specific — although not very difficult to understand — that they seem to shape the films in unusual and sometimes problematic ways. But it is this very specificity that gives the work its tone and hard edge, its power and its insight.

For whatever reason — probably the economics of who controls the market — almost none of Fassbinder's films are out on video cassette. So this festival at the Brattle is one of the few places to see any — not to mention 16 — of his films. Catch them now because they won't be around again for a while. □

Divine


Continued from back page

ing mother who just doesn't understand the rock and roll dance crazes of those kooky kids in the early sixties. The film deals simplistically but admirably with issues of racism and integration, and if one gets the sense that Divine is passing the torch to a new generation of Waters legends, it is also clear that there would always be room for Divine in the filmmakers' firmament. With *Hairspray* his career truly did come full circle. Edna lives with her husband Wilbur above his business, the Hardy-Har Joke Shop. The facade of their home is decorated with images of the store's best sellers including whoopee cushions, exploding gum, and right by the front door in big block letters... "*Plastic Doggie Doo.*" Divine's performance was truly wonderful, and although I wondered how he would ever top *Hairspray* I was looking forward to seeing him try.

According to the reports of his death, Divine died on March 7 of asphyxiation in his hotel room while in Los Angeles to film a guest shot on Fox TV's *Married With Children*. He also had a small part on deck in the upcoming film by director Paul Bartel, for whom Divine starred in *Lust in the Dust*. He also recently reaffirmed his appreciation to the gay community. Although he perpetually bristled at being described as a drag queen ("I'm a character actor who does female impersonations" he'd tell anyone and everyone), he vowed to never turn his back on the people who made him a star. "Donna Summer turned her back on the gay community and where is she today?"

And as he further explained to the *Native*, "I've been accused of setting gays back with my female impersonations. Then I'll meet some conservative gay couple and they'll introduce themselves as husband and wife, with the dogs as their babies. They are the ones setting gays back 50 years." □

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Alexander Berkman, *Prison Memoirs of an Anarchist*

Prisoners & Friends: BEWARE

Apparently the FBI (etc) is using GCN to 'seduce' people into talking about their interest in sex with teenagers ('minors'). They have even used PRISONER addresses! (so you think you're writing another prisoner)...SO, AT LEAST make sure you have been writing to someone for a long time and really feel you know them WELL before talking explicitly about any interest in teenagers, and perhaps talk about other stuff. (Just be aware.)



My poetry and fiction have appeared in PAN, and First Hand and I would like to find caring people with whom to correspond. To be honest I may occasionally ask for help in securing magazine subscriptions or research projects but I don't intend to make a nuisance of myself. I am a loving person. Russell KINKADE, D-49582-FA-3120, PO Box 29, Represa CA 95671

I am 50 yrs old and don't have anyone in our line of gays to write to. I would like to write to someone young. It gets lonely in here not hearing from anyone. I don't mind writing love words to a young person just as long as he isn't in prison because we have to leave our letters open for the guards to read if they are going to other prisoners. Otherwise we can seal them. I hope to get out soon. Thank you for your paper. Robert LEE, 86C 0766, Box 367A, Danemora NY 12929

Hi all you sweet sexy guys out there in the free world. My name is 'Brenda Kay' and I'm a bi-transvestite that loves very femme clothing. My interests are being on the town in drag, dancing, and a tall well-hung romantic guy. Write to me at: Michael ALLEN, 45389 (4-D)16, 1012 W. Columbia, Farmington MO 63640.

Here in this prison there are many of us Cuban Mariel homosexual 'detainees'. We are each hoping to find a 'sponsor' who will help us find a job so we can get out of here. It would be very nice also to hear from some Spanish speaking people. And all colors. The race is not the matter. Please keep sending us your very fine paper. Leonardo Flores PALOMO, 04959-131, Box 1000, Leavenworth KS 66048.



Prisoners: WARNING!

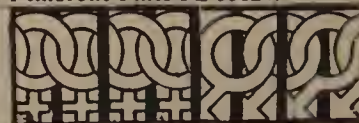
There are a couple of 'adult' mag. companies that are ripping prisoners off. They are: *Leisure Concepts (In Gary, Indiana), and *Dyna-Mag Sales (in Van Nuys, Calif.). Isn't it something how the outsiders write in complaining about how they're worried about prisoners ripping them off, and they never even think about how the outsiders are ripping off prisoners!



I am a Black Gay Woman. My sign is Aquarius and I am looking for someone to correspond with, hopefully a more masculine woman. Color makes no difference. Cynthia WILCOX, 150370 (497), PO Box 8540, Pembroke Pines FL 33024.

Black female who likes to have good fun, romantic dinners, music and dancing would like to have a penpal. Tywanna MARTIN, 1951, 8000 W.7th St (W/UI), Pine Bluff AR 71603

I am presently 19 yrs old and doing hard time and need a friend. I've been gay all my life and I would appreciate an ad in your paper. Thank you. Lorrain MILES, A151555 (263), PO Box 8540, Pembroke Pines FL 33024.



Thank you so much for all your paper has done for me. I am going to be released in May of this year and would sincerely appreciate any friendly correspondence from GCN readers who might be able to help me find work when I'm out. Any help at all would be useful. Thanks. Grover BECKLEY, Rt 1 Box 36, Jackson NC 27845.

Southeastern prisoners — The FRONT PAGE, a gay/lesbian paper in North Carolina will run free penpal ads when they have extra space for prisoners from these states (ONLY): NC, SC, TN, VA, WV and GA. Please don't expect them to answer letters as they don't have the extra people to do this. Front Page, Box 25642, Raleigh NC 27611.

I have a degree in Architectural Drafting and am an artist, seeking a friendship and some possible leads on jobs when I get out, possibly later this year. I am unpretentious and enjoy the outdoors and wilderness, as well as various types of music. Terry RADICCHE, Box 137 Rt 2, Creswell, NC 27928.

I have a burning desire to be man-handled. Need friends who can fill me with passion and their love tool. If you can satisfy, please write Brian 'Louise' MASSEY, 16785-077, Box 1000, Seagoville TX 75159.

I would like to just correspond with someone from the free world. I've been down for awhile and have awhile to go, and 'family and friends' seem to have forgotten. George T. COMBS, A-077273, 3876 Evans Rd, Box 50, Polk City FL 33868.

Even though I am what you might consider a heterosexual, I still get along very well with my opposites in the gay community and the only reason I feel as why I have not gotten involved in these activities is because I have not met anyone as of yet to turn me on the way I would like to be switched on. I am locked away in the slave state of Alabama for something I didn't do, but with my being a Gemini my innocence will show through soon (I hope). I'm not looking for handouts, just someone to talk with on a friendly and personal basis. I am of Afrikan descent, vegetarian, non-smoking, into body building and dabble some in poetry. Dennis Jerome COPENY, 143927, 100 St.Clair Rd, Springville AL 35146.

I enjoy quiet moments and walking the ocean, and would enjoy writing another gay man. Terry CROUCH, 711809, Mail 840, 1150 SW Allapattah Rd, Indiantown FL 34956.

I'm seeking a relationship with a gay male from California who might be able to visit me and write. I'd also be glad to write any gay prisoners who are able to write other prisoners. Charles VIDAL, C-21241, PO Box 8101 — 2208X, San Luis Obispo CA 93409.

I've been gay since I was 8 years old. I'm happiest in the male role. I'm half Sicilian and wear a very thick moustache. I really don't want to play any head games or hear from anyone who does. I hope to find a sincere relationship. Jessie COWANS, 152-294, Box 45699, Lucasville OH 45699.

I'm a lonely, Black male prisoner, bi, attractive, muscular, seeking intelligent beautiful transperson or feminine gay male, any age or race, for honest friendship. Please write legibly. Anthony PERKINS, 86A 4576, Box 149, Attica NY 14011.



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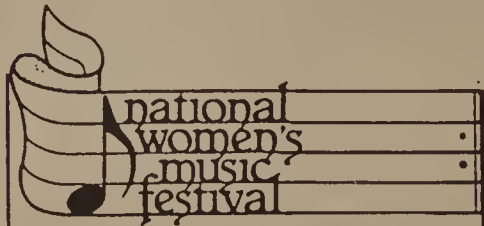
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236-1848

Calendar

12 SATURDAY TO
20 SUNDAY

20 Sunday □ Mime artist and comedian Jim Vetter (inset) joins hilarious political pop musicians The Girilllas in GCN's multi-cultural Les/Gay Cabaret. See other performers below.



12 Saturday

Cambridge □ **Storytellers in Concert** in "Silkie — Shape Changer of the Celtic Lands" with Jennifer Justice, mime David Zucker, and photographer Susan Wilson. (Also 3/13, 18-20, 25-27.) Welch Auditorium, Lesley College. Fridays & Saturdays 8pm; Sundays 7pm. \$8 (\$5 students, seniors). Info: 286-2234.

Boston □ **Triangle Theater Company** presents "The Children's Hour," by Lillian Hellman. Thursdays through Saturdays, through March 19. Paramount Penthouse Theater, 58 Berkeley St. 8pm. \$12.50. Info: 426-3550.

Boston □ Girth & Mirth of New England **Gaylick Party** at the Hill House. 74 Joy St. 8-10pm. Info: Joe, 926-5827; Lenny, 389-5635.

Boston □ "Something About the Women" interviews Sara Laughs. WMFO 91.5FM. 11am. Info: 643-8324.

Cambridge □ **Women's Craft Market** will be selling and exhibiting their works in celebration of International Women's Day. Downstairs at 186 Hampshire St. 11am-5pm. (Also 3/13, 12 noon-5pm.) Free admission. Info: 288-9787.

Boston □ **Living With AIDS Theatre Project** presents a workshop to collect the experiences and stories of those connected in any way with the AIDS crisis every Saturday. The goal is to create a theater music piece based on the workshop material. No performance experience necessary. Club Cabaret, 209 Columbus Ave. 10:30am.

Boston □ Greater Boston Lesbian and Gay Political Alliance **1988 Kickoff Fundraiser Party**. The Links Club, 120 Boylston St. 5-9pm. \$15 in advance; \$20 at door. Info: 265-0348 or 661-3661.

Roxbury □ "From Johannesburg to Jerusalem to Roxbury — Women In Struggle" sponsored by Boston Women's Committee for International Women's Day. Speakers from the African National Congress Women's Section and the Union of Palestinian Women's Associations in the U.S. International food and dancing following program. Wheelchair accessible, ASL interpreted. Parish Hall, First Church, 10 Putnam St. 7pm. \$3-\$5 donation.

13 Sunday

Cambridge □ **Men of All Colors Together** — **Boston** St. Patrick's Day Emerald Dinner. Topic of discussion: "Irishmen and Dogs Need Not Apply," a study of discrimination against Irish and Black people in Boston. Phillip Brooks House, Harvard Yard. 1-5pm. Donation requested.

So. Lawrence □ Haverhill/Lawrence/Newburyport/So. NH lesbians meet for **monthly potluck**. Bring a dish to share. 6:30pm. Info and directions: 689-9418.

Boston □ **GCN Membership Meeting**. All ongoing volunteers, board, and staff are invited to discuss class issues at the paper and in the lesbian/gay community. Bring munchies to share. 62 Berkeley St. 3-6pm. Info: 426-4469.

Cambridge □ **Rock Against Sexism** announces its mid-March Disc Party at ManRay. 21 or older to get in. 21 Brookline St. 6-9pm. \$2-3 donation.

Boston □ "Rhythms of Hope: Boston Dancers Unite Against AIDS." To benefit AIDS Action Committee. Featuring Boston Ballet and Lar Lubovitch Dance Company. John Hancock Hall. 8pm. \$25 in advance; \$30 at door. Info: 262-4307.

Jamaica Plain □ Lesbian and Gay Neighbors of Jamaica Plain **Potluck Feast**. Please bring a dish and a non-alcoholic beverage to share. Speaker from the Jamaica Plain Arts Council. First Church Hall, corner of Eliot and Centre Sts. 4-7pm. Info: 522-3894, or 522-6253.

Boston □ Studio Red Top presents **Jazz Women In Concert**, featuring many of the area's most promising female musicians. Villa Victoria, 85 West Newton St. 3pm (\$5); 8pm (\$8). Info: 397-8311.

Boston □ Massachusetts Gay & Lesbian Political Caucus **10th Annual Auction**. MGLPC's primary fundraising event of the year. The Cabaret at the Club Cafe, 209 Columbus Ave. 4pm.

Boston □ **Boston's Other Voice** special guest Joseph Antonelli, co-founder of the North Shore Gay and Lesbian Alliance. WROR 98.5FM. 12:30am (Monday morning).

14 Monday

Boston □ General meeting for people interested in the **Boston Center for Lesbians and Gay Men**. All welcome; refreshments provided. Boston City Hall. 7pm. Info: John Graves, 266-2069.

Boston □ The Committee on Gay and Lesbian Issues of the National Association of Social Workers sponsors an **alumnae/alumni dinner** and social gathering. Open to all social workers and social work students. Info: 625-2609 (eves).

Cambridge □ Panel discussion on "Gay and Lesbian Rights: A Political Action Agenda for the Future." With Barney Frank, Pat Norman, Harry Britt, Virginia Apuzzo, and John Boswell. John F. Kennedy School of Government, 79 JFK St. 8pm. Info: 661-8132 or 495-1380.

15 Tuesday

Boston □ **Gay Fathers of Greater Boston** meet to discuss "Part Time Parenting." 6 Hamilton Pl., 3rd floor. 8pm. Info: 742-7897.

Cambridge □ Discussion group in ASL for **Deaf women with incest histories**. Meets third Tuesday of every month. Open only to Deaf women with incest histories. The Women's Center, 46 Pleasant St. 7:30-9:30pm. Free. Info: 354-8807 (voice/TDD).

Cambridge □ David Schulman, the nation's first full-time government AIDS discrimination attorney, gives a talk on "AIDS and Law in a Time of Madness." Sperry Rm., Andover Hall, Harvard Divinity School, 45 Francis Ave. 7:30pm. Info: 354-5897.

16 Wednesday

Cambridge □ **Lesbians 50 plus or minus** discuss "Accepting Our Physical Changes." DOB, Old Cambridge Baptist Church, 1151 Mass. Ave. 8pm. \$1. Info: 661-3633.

Boston □ **MASS ACT OUT** weekly meeting, all welcome. 7:30pm. Call tape for location and info: 661-7737.

Cambridge □ **Marriage of Maria Braun and The Third Generation** screened at the Fassbinder Film Festival at the Brattle Theatre, 40 Brattle St. \$4.75 for the double bill. Call 876-6837 for show times.

Cambridge □ "Say It, Sister." Paula Doress and Diana Siegal discuss their book, "Ourselves Growing Older" with Jennifer Abod. WMBR, 88.1FM. 7-8pm

17 Thursday

Boston □ **GCN's** production night. All welcome. Proofreading starts at 5pm. Paste-up after 7pm. 62 Berkeley St., near Arlington & Back Bay T-stops. Info: **GCN**, 426-4469.

18 Friday

Boston □ **GCN mailing**. We need your help mailing out the paper Friday afternoons and evenings. Join the party, meet new friends and contribute to the community. Catering by Berkeley Pizza and Downtown Cafe. Anytime between 2 and 9pm. 62 Berkeley St., near Arlington & Back Bay T-stops. Info: **GCN**, 426-4469.

Worcester □ AIDS Project — Worcester **support group** meets every Friday night for HIV positive, PWA's, PWARC's, lovers, friends, and the worried well. Open to all lesbians and gay men regardless of HIV status. 51 Jackson St. 7-9pm. Info: Dana, 755-3773.

Waltham □ Triskelion, Brandeis University's Gay/Lesbian/Bisexual Coalition presents **Tupperware and Turkey Basters**: a dance. Schwartz Auditorium. 10pm-2am. \$3 w/student ID, \$4 without. Info: 736-4761.

Boston □ Women's Theological Center presents a program "Barriers to Dialogue: Confronting Issues of Class." With Candace Cason, Executive Director, Women, Inc.; Meizhu Lui, President, AFSCME 1489, Boston City Hospital; and writer Pam Mitchell. UMass/Boston CPCS, 100 Arlington St. 7-9pm. \$5-7. Info: 277-1330.

19 Saturday

Brookline □ Am Tikva, Boston's organization for lesbian and gay Jews, presents **the United Fruit Company in "Poly Esther!"** (a non-traditional rendition of the Purim story). Workmen's Circle, 1762 Beacon St. \$5 donation requested. Proceeds will go to an Israeli Peace group. All welcome. Info: 782-8894.

Salem □ The North Shore Gay and Lesbian Alliance presents **The Freedom Trail Band** in concert, with an opening act by vocalist/guitarist Susan Ryder. Old Salem Town Hall, Denby Sq., Essex St. Doors open at 7pm, concert begins at 8. NSGLA members \$5; non-members \$7. Info: 327-9853 or 625-3304.

Boston □ Prime Timers "St. Patrick's Day Plus Two" party. Food, fun, entertainment. All older gay men invited. Upstairs at Playland, 21 Essex St. 1:30-4pm. Info: PO Box 352, Reading, MA 01867.

Boston □ **Boston Gay Men's Chorus** concert "Share the Dream." ASL interpreted. Jordan Hall, New England Conservatory, Huntington Ave. and Gainsborough St. 8pm. \$12 and \$8. Info: 536-2412.

Cambridge □ **Women's Center 16th Birthday Party**. All women are invited to help us celebrate. Childcare available. 12-5pm. Info: 354-8807 (TTY/voice).

20 Sunday

Cambridge □ **Second Annual Multi-Cultural Les/Gay Cabaret to Benefit Gay Community News!** Music, comedy, portry, magic, mime and dance with The Girilllas, Jim Vetter, Jewelle Gomez, Jeffry Pike, Stephen Pelton and a special performance of "Poly Esther (a creative twist on the story of Purim)" by Abe Rybeck. Emcees: Urvasi Vaid and Abe Rybeck. 7:30pm. Paine Hall, Harvard (behind Science Center). \$25 contributing, \$10 regular, \$5 low income (through **GCN** only). Some free tickets available for PWAs. ASL-interpreted, wheelchair accessible. For childcare or other info call **GCN** at 426-4469.

Jamaica Plain □ Lesbian and Gay Neighbors of Jamaica Plain **maple sugaring**. Join them at Curtis Hall (Municipal Building) on South St. at 10am for caravan and carpooling to Boggastow Farm in Pepperel, MA. Info: Lucien, 522-6253.

Somerville □ **Asian Lesbian Past and Present** slide show and potluck, presented by Boston Asian Gay Men and Lesbians. A global survey of Asian lesbianism. 6pm. \$3 donation. Call for reservations: Jack, 547-8647. Followed by Asian Lesbians and Gay Men night out at Campus.

Boston □ **Boston's Other Voice** Replay of interview with Buffy Dunker on coming out late in life. WROR 98.5FM. 12:30am (Monday morning).

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Note: Calendar submissions must be received by the Monday before publication at: Calendar Coordinator, **GCN**, 62 Berkeley St., Boston, MA 02116.

CALENDAR COMPILED BY
TODD HOLLISTER

Few original superlatives can be applied to the career and talents of Divine — he applied them all to himself in his lifetime. But just the same, “big, bold, brassy and very, very funny,” come to mind. His filmography spans two decades and recent years saw a greater portion of the public catching up to the Divine Phenomenon. Divine-the-cult-sensation was creeping closer to mainstream success, a process cemented by the rave reviews for his performance in *Hairspray*, John Waters’ newest film released a few weeks ago. Waters was the partner-in-grime to the 300-pound actor (real name Harris Glenn Milstead) and together they set out to dazzle the world with their grossly bizarre and funny films.

If Divine had existed in a previous incarnation it absolutely would have to have been as a superstar actress in the old Hollywood studio star system, a la Jayne Mansfield or Lana Turner. Like these great stars (whom Divine often cited as being among his influences) it is difficult to separate the truth in his life story from the legend that he and Waters created. In a recent spate of interviews which hit the stands just after the release of *Hairspray* and a couple of weeks before his death in a Los Angeles hotel room, the legend was repeated everywhere from *Interview* to the current issue of the *New York Native*, and perhaps embellished once again.

“John named me Divine back in ‘62,” he told Joseph Lanz of the *Native*. The two have long painted a picture of growing up together in Baltimore (“The hairdo capital of the world,” says Waters) as social outcasts in an unfriendly environment. Divine first experimented with genderbending in the early 1970s with the Cockettes in San Francisco.

While Divine was first playing with makeup and wigs, John Waters was fooling around with home movie cameras. They made some below-low budget films like *Multiple Maniacs* and *Mondo Trasho*, with roles tailor-made for Divine and plot lines tailor-made to gross out and/or offend as many viewers as possible.

They really hit their stride with *Pink Flamingos* in the mid-70s. In it Divine



The Turnblad Family Portrait: Wilbur (Jerry Stiller), Tracy (Ricki Lake) and Edna (Divine) did up the Sixties and their hairdos in *Hairspray*, Divine's last film

played Babs Johnson, a woman obsessed with being known as The Filthiest Person Alive. According to the Divine/Waters Legend, the director allegedly told the diva about his plans for the grossest finale in filmdom. “If you do this,” Waters explained, “Your name will be a household word.”

Whether or not this is how Waters convinced Divine to ingest a mouthful of poodle poop and to preserve the perversity on celluloid for generations of filmgoers to come is beside the point. Divine did the stunt, and in fact, has insisted in interviews ever since that he didn't chew the stuff up or swallow it, he merely swished it around his

mouth, spat it out and immediately threw up. But this was certainly the first step toward the type of status that got his photo (both in drag and out) on the front pages and in the obituary sections of most major newspapers in the country this week.

After *Flamingos* Divine went on to more Waters films, including the hilarious *Female Trouble* and a series of auxiliary endeavors which amounted to a virtual Divine Cottage Industry.

The *Divine Paper Doll* book surfaced at about the same time that he launched a recording career. It featured paper dresses and wigs from each of his films, as well as

makeup do's and don'ts. His records, including a ditty called “Born To Be Cheap” and a cover of “The Name Game” sold well in Europe and his live concert tours were successful all over the world.

He generally performed at gay bars and discos and was last in the Boston area at Metro about a year ago. A year and a half prior to that I saw Divine's Halloween week performance at Man-Ray in Cambridge, and what he lacked in singing voice and dancing ability he more than made up in presence. What can you say about a three-hundred-pound man in a wig and a dress with a growl you'd expect to hear from a truck driver? The performance was filled with ribald jokes, was in fact itself a joke and the fun thing was that both Divine and the audience were in on it. For awhile we were all believers, including Divine himself.

In the '80s Divine played his first truly sympathetic character, the beleaguered Francine Fishpaw in Water's *Polyester*. Looking like Elizabeth Taylor and suffering the kinds of indignities that Joan Crawford did so well, like a son with a foot fetish and a philandering husband, Francine was a woman with a desire to keep her life free of conflict and her home odor-free. The gimmick for this film, of course, was that moviegoers got to Smell Along With Divine by using the “Odorama” scratch and sniff cards passed out when the film was first in release. *Polyester* was Water's biggest film to date, lighter on the gross-for-grossness' sake scenes and a real tour de force for Divine. It was worth the price of admission to see Francine kiss her boyfriend Todd Tomorrow, played by Tab Hunter.

Sitting in the first screening of *Hairspray* a couple of weeks ago, I became aware of a silly grin I had on my face through the entire film. I immediately formed a review in my head with the headline “*Hairspray*: The Best Movie On Earth.” Divine is too old to play the teenage lead, but the movie is almost all his as Edna Turnblad, mother of teen dance queen Tracy Turnblad. There is absolutely no sense of a put-on in Divine's performance, you don't get a sense that he's about to turn to the camera and wink. Instead, Divine plays the part as a sweet, lov-

Continued on page 11

BUY TIX NOW! LAST YEAR'S SOLD OUT!

Music, comedy,
poetry, magic,
mime, dance,

& a special
performance of
Poly Esther
(A creative twist
on the story of Purim)
by Abe Rybeck

2nd Annual
Multi-Cultural

LES/GAY CABARET!

The Girlillas
Jim Vetter
Jewelle Gomez
Jeffry Pike
Stephen Pelton

Emcees: Urvashi Vaid,
Abe Rybeck of
United Fruit Company

To Benefit Gay Community News
Sunday, March 20



7:30 p.m., Paine Hall,
Harvard (behind Science Center)
Prices: \$25 contributing,
\$10 regular, \$5 low income (through
GCN only) Some free tickets available for PWAs.
ASL interpreted for the hearing impaired.
Wheelchair accessible. For childcare
or other information call GCN at 426-4469.

Advance tickets may be
purchased at: New Words Bookstore,
Bodyworks Gym, Mobilization for Survival
(Cambridge) • Arborway Video & Sound
(Jamaica Plain) • Glad Day Bookshop
(Back Bay) • or the GCN office (South End).
Tickets are also available by mail from: GCN
Tickets, 62 Berkeley Street, Boston, MA 02116.